MMR_0134 Michael Lamar Callahan B: 1939 to D: 1998

Mike Callahan, 59, of East Point was well-known for his exact models of railroads and buildings.

The funeral for Mr. Callahan will be held at 2 p.m. today at A.C. Hemperley & Sons. Mr. Callahan died of an apparent heart attack Tuesday at South Fulton Medical Center.

Mr. Callahan began his hobby of railroad model building as a child.

Photo not located. Contact:
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"He was playing with his trains and he got so inquisitive that he wanted to see how they were made and what they were made of," said his friend of 20 years, Werner Schuettke of Jonesboro.

While employed as a civil engineer for the city of East Point, Mr. Callahan supervised the design and construction of the Dick Lane Velodrome, used in the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games as a bicycling practice track, said Bruce DeBolt, the city's former director of utilities.

When Mr. Callahan retired from his job with the city, he started to build models full time.

"He had that on his mind all the time," said Mr. Schuettke. "His dining room table was covered with material for things he was about to start building."

Mr. Callahan was known for the exactness of his models.

"When he a put a nut and a bolt on a bridge, you could see a nut and a bolt, no matter how minute it was," said Mr. Schuettke.

Mr. Callahan even built an exact model of Billy Carter's service station in Plains, said his former wife, Janice Callahan of Rex. Billy Carter was the brother of former President Jimmy Carter.

"We went down there and drew sketches, took pictures and exact measurements of that service station," said Mrs. Callahan. "Everything he did was an exact replica. He was a perfectionist."

Mr. Callahan also enjoyed building models for friends.

One of his last projects was a bridge for a friend's back-yard model design, said Mr. Schuettke.

Mr. Callahan was a master model railroader in the Piedmont Division of the South-

He often lectured at meetings on how to build models.

"People called him all the time to help with their model railroads," said Mrs. Callahan.

However, Mr. Callahan did not share his knowledge to gain recognition for himself.

"He never tried to promote himself in any way," Mrs. Callahan said. "He did it for a hobby. But he did it perfect."